

Blessed
"Those Who Mourn"
7/9/17

-Intro:

-New Series on the Beatitudes called "Blessed"
-The word that is translated "blessed" is actually the word for extreme happiness.

-And Jesus spoke about this subject at great length.

-When we think about "Supreme Happiness" we think about external things:

-Ourselves, our circumstances, and the changes in life.

-Jesus didn't talk about happiness like this.

-He talked about deep inward, lasting, satisfying happiness that is not based on the physical but on the spiritual.

-Jesus starts off his discourse on happiness with this phrase:

-**Matthew 5:3** (NIV) He said:

³ **"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

-Remember what I said last week about these 8 happy statements made by Jesus:

-These are not 8 individual, stand-alone statements by Jesus that you can take out and extract.

-NO, they are linked together with one building upon and leading to the other.

-They are spiritual building blocks or links in a chain.

-They all describe in full one important topic, salvation and the Christian life.

-The next statement that Jesus makes in this spiritual progression is found in vs 4.

-**Matthew 5:4** (NIV) **Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.**

-In New York City, it is believed to be the home of at least eight million cats.

-When one dies, it creates quite a problem because you can't just go out into the backyard and bury it.

-The city charges a fee of fifty dollars to remove the carcass.

-One day a woman came up with a brilliant idea.

-She placed this ad in the newspaper: "When your pet cat dies, I'll take care of it for you for only \$25."

-Since this was half the price of the city fee, phone calls began coming in.

-But how did her business actually work?

-The woman would go to the local Salvation Army Thrift Store and buy an old suitcase for two or 3 three dollars.

-When someone called for her services, she went to the home and carefully placed the cat in the suitcase.

-She would then take a ride on the subway in the early evening--a perfect time for pickpockets and thieves--and place the suitcase near the door of the car and walk away from it.

-A thief would come by when the doors opened, steal the suitcase, and run out.

-She would yell, "Stop, thief!" But she didn't really want them to stop.

-She received \$25 for her work.

-The thief received a dead cat.

-Don't you know that when the thief opened the suitcase, he mourned!

-Is this the kind of grieving that Jesus had in mind when he said, “Blessed are those who mourn?”

-Let’s examine this statement for a moment.

-Blessed are those who mourn.

-Literally “Oh the happiness of those who mourn.”

-Doesn’t that sound a little bit weird?

-When was the last time you saw a happy, grieving person?

-Jesus doesn’t even tell His audience what to mourn for.

-He just tells them that they will be comforted.

-The Greek word for mourn is the strongest word for mourning in the Greek language.

-It is mourning like mourning for the dead.

-Passionate lament and grieving for the loss of a loved one that cannot be hid and brings unrestrained tears to the eyes.

-Jesus knew this emotion well.

-In John chapter 11, Jesus approaches the tomb of His dear friend Lazarus.

-As He approaches, you have the shortest Scripture in all the Bible... “Jesus Wept.”

-Jesus wept because of the unbelief of the people and He wept because He was fully human and His heart was hurting.

-Scholars have mixed opinions on what we are to be mourning for.

-Some believe that we are to mourn for famines, natural disasters and injustice in the world.

-I believe that these are good things to mourn for but I don’t believe this is what Jesus is referring to.

-Remember what I said last week:

-This happiness is not based on the physical but the spiritual

-(This is deep, lasting, spiritual happiness)

-And all of these statements are linked together springing from the **first statement**.

-Let’s look at it again:

-**Matthew 5:3** (NIV) He said:

³ **“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

-“Poor in Spirit”: Recognizing that you are spiritually bankrupt, wholly unclean before a Holy God, morally depraved, inherently evil and totally corrupt and intrinsically sinful.

-NO GOOD THING WITHIN YOU DWELLS.

-Your eyes being opened to who you really are before a holy God is entrance into kingdom of Heaven.

-Because it causes you to call out to Christ to save you from that original condition.

-But, what’s the natural response when you realize your true condition?

-**Matthew 5:4** (NIV) **Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.**

-It is mourning over your sinful condition, over what you have done and who you have become.

-**Story:** Talking to a man this past week who has been a Christ-follower for a long time.

-I asked him how he came to Christ, how he met Jesus.

- He was an alcoholic, drug addict.
- Upon deciding to give all that stuff up in order to clean up his act, he went out one last night to get drunk one final time.
 - He was pulled over on his drive home, his 2nd DUI.
 - He was put in jail.
 - In his cell, the Holy Spirit, drove him to his knees.
 - In that moment, the Lord showed him all of his past and he grieved.
 - He truly was Poor in Spirit.
- In that moment of revelation, this man began to weep uncontrollably.
 - He began confessing his sin, arguing with God that he couldn't possibly be forgiven for certain things he had done.
 - God just kept pronouncing forgiveness over this man and lifting the burden of guilt that this man was finally awakened to.
- His desire for alcohol and drugs was taken away and a desire to serve the Lord was put in its place.
 - It was in jail that his soul was set free.

-William Barclay *“What changes men is when they come up against something which opens their eyes to what sin is and what sin does.”*

-What a true statement.

-That's what Jesus means by “mourning.”

-It is mourning over sin.

-It is been told that when **John Wesley** (the famous Methodist preacher in the 1800's that I had the privilege of standing in his pulpit when I was in London) when he preached to the miners of Kingswood, they were move to such grief that their tears made runnels as they ran down the grim and soot on their faces.

-When Jesus preached “the kingdom is near” He, like John the Baptist, expected NOT jubilation but contrite tears of repentance.

-Jesus in this verse “Blessed are those who mourn” is speaking of that same deep level of grief we feel when we mourn over the loss of loved ones.

 -And what is promised to a person who truly mourns over their sin?

-“THEY WILL BE COMFORTED.”

-Isn't that great?

-Dr. Stephen Davey *“Mourners are not happy because they are mourning . . . they are happy because they are forgiven. Happiness does not come from mourning; it comes from God's response to it--which is comfort.”*

-This word for comfort is the same word used to describe the ministry of the Holy Spirit, who is called THE Comforter. In that moment of mourning over sin, the Holy Spirit brings comfort.

-The verb tens here in this text denotes continuous action.

-We continuously confess our sin and God continuously meets us in that places with comfort.

 -What all does the Comfort of Christ include?

(1) **Forgiveness**

-**John 1:7** (ESV) But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

-The word for “cleanses” in the original language gives the idea that God does more than forgive.

-He erases the stain of sin.

-This word also gives the idea of continual action:

-The blood of Christ did not just cleanse us from our past

-No, it continually cleanses us in our ongoing, daily experience.

-The blood of Christ cleanses us from ALL sin every moment of every day.

-When God looks at you He doesn't see you, He sees the blood of Jesus perpetually washed over you.

-I love the hymn:

*There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.*

(2) Restoration

-The Lord in that moment is not leaving us as we were.

-No, He is restoring us to what He wants us to be.

-**2 Corinthians 5:17** (ESV) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

-He restores us with strength and courage, His strength and His courage.

(3) Freedom

-No longer worried about being condemned.

-No longer worried that God is going to bring those things up and shake them in our faces.

-**Psalms 103:12** (NLT) He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west.

-**Romans 8:1** (NLT) So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.

-No, we are free!

-**John 8:36** (NIV) So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

(4) Presence

-It is the comfort of Christ Himself.

-Jesus will meet you in that moment.

-YOU WILL BE COMFORTED.

-Who brings that comfort?

-Jesus.

-It is the presence of Jesus in that moment.

(5) Future Hope

-One day, we will be away from sin, forever.

-**1 John 3:2** (NIV) Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

-**Revelation 21:4** (NLT) He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever."

-Right now there is weeping over sin and there should be.

-But, praise God, we have a future hope that guarantees the absence of sin and the absence of mourning.

-Conclusion:

-Do you realize your spiritual poverty before God?

-Has there been a point in your life when you mourned over your sin?

-It is in these moments that you will receive the comfort of Christ.

-**Matthew 5:4** (NIV) **Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.**

-Bridge Group Questions:

1. What stood out to you most about this week's message?

2. When was the last time you shared your story of how you met Christ? Take some time and do that now with one another.

3. Has there been a time when you wept over your sin? Not because you were caught but because you knew it grieved the heart of God. Tell about that time.

4. Is weeping over your sin something that happens to you on a regular basis?

5. In your mourning over sin, do you feel forgiveness, restoration, freedom, presence of Jesus and one day future hope?